

## WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

**COMMITTEE: TOURISM**

**DATE: JULY 27, 2011**

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**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

SUPERVISORS MERLINO  
KENNY  
STRAINER  
GOODSPEED  
MCCOY  
CONOVER

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

REPRESENTING THE TOURISM DEPARTMENT:

KATE JOHNSON, DIRECTOR  
PETER GIRARD, CREATIVE DIRECTOR  
TANYA BRAND, GROUP TOUR PROMOTER  
PAUL DUSEK, COUNTY ATTORNEY/ADMINISTRATOR  
JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD  
KEVIN GERAGHTY, BUDGET OFFICER

**COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:**

SUPERVISORS BELDEN

SUPERVISOR TAYLOR  
SUPERVISOR THOMAS  
TOM CONNORS, AD WORKSHOP  
MIKE CONSUELO, SPECIAL EVENTS COORDINATOR, LAKE GEORGE REGIONAL  
CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU  
FRED AUSTIN, FORT WILLIAM HENRY  
DON LEHMAN, *THE POST STAR*  
CHARLENE DIRESTA, SR. LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

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Mr. Merlino called the meeting of the Tourism Committee to order at 10:00 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Conover and carried unanimously to approve the minutes of the previous Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Kate Johnson, Tourism Director, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members; *a copy of the agenda is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson introduced Tom Connors, of Ad Workshop, who would update the Committee on the Summer television campaign later in the meeting. She noted that she had met with Mr. Merlino about the possibility of having a different Town Supervisor report on their local tourism at each Committee meeting and Mr. Merlino would give the first report at this meeting.

Commencing with the agenda review, Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Kenyon Press, Inc. to print 275,000 copies of the 2012 Warren County Travel Guide for a term commencing September 1, 2011 and terminating October 31, 2011 in an amount not to exceed \$77,647. She noted that Kenyon Press, Inc. had been the lowest responsible bidder.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Kenyon Press, Inc. as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 19, 2011 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested a contract with Benchmark Printing, Inc. to print 3,000 copies of the 2012 Group Tour Planner for a term commencing August 22, 2011 and terminating October 31, 2011 in an amount not to exceed \$4,095. She noted that Benchmark Printing, Inc. had been the lowest responsible bidder.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Goodspeed and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with Benchmark Printing, Inc. as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form*

*is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 19, 2011 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson requested authorization for a contract with the lowest responsible bidder to print 60,000 copies of the 2011 Winter Brochure. She noted the selection would be made by August 5, 2011 and she would forward the necessary resolution request form to the Clerk of the Board at that time.

Motion was made by Mr. Kenny, seconded by Mr. McCoy and carried unanimously to authorize a contract with the lowest responsible bidder for printing of the 2011 Winter Brochure as outlined above. *A copy of the resolution request form is on file with the minutes and the necessary resolution was authorized for the August 19, 2011 Board meeting.*

Ms. Johnson stated the Department had initiated a Client Labels Program in 1998 which allowed area lodging properties and businesses to request address labels of people in the Warren County Tourism database based on their areas of interest, at a fee of three cents per label. She said interest in the Program had decreased from 137 clients in 1998 to 42 clients in 2010 and she wanted to discontinue the Program as the revenues generated were no longer worth the time and effort. She apprised that clients could continue to receive leads electronically free of charge, although they would not be based on the areas of interest of the people in the database. She advised that the clients would be given appropriate notice of the discontinuation of the Program and notice would also be placed in the Newsletter. Mr. Merlino suggested that the current clients be notified and that the Committee wait an additional month to allow time for the clients to comment on the possible discontinuation of the Program.

Motion was made by Mr. McCoy, seconded by Mr. Kenny and carried unanimously to table the decision to discontinue the Client Labels Program until the next Committee meeting to allow the current clients time to comment.

Ms. Johnson announced that the 2012 Warren County Travel Guide, for which the Committee had previously authorized the printing contract, had 64 advertisers. She said four full pages had been reserved by the Gore Mountain Region, who would reprint the pages for use in other brochures and advertisements. She commented that the 2011 Fall Brochure had been received from the printer and copies were currently being distributed. She added that the drop ship locations had received their copies of the 2011 Fall Brochure the previous week; *a copy of the 2011 Fall Brochure is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson said she had reported at a previous Committee meeting that an Online Hot Air Balloon Brochure had been suggested by an area balloonist. She noted that requests for information had been sent to seven area balloonists, three of which responded. Peter Girard, Creative Director, mentioned that the Online Hot Air Balloon Brochure had been completed and would go live online at the end of the week. Mr. Girard displayed the six-page Online Hot Air Balloon Brochure for the Committee members; *a printout of same is on copy with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson reported that she tracked the monthly requests for information for the Department and the year to date inquiries as of June 2011 had increased by 14.8% compared to the same time period for 2010. She stated that the New York State Division of Tourism, "I ♥ NY", had announced the new "Save the Date" Campaign to place New York State in the forefront as a premier destination for same-sex weddings following the July 24, 2011 legalization of same-sex marriages in New York State. She added that the "I ♥ NY" logo had been changed to make the heart symbol rainbow

colored in celebration of same-sex marriages. She said the Department had queried the area lodging properties to determine if they had any packages available specific to same-sex marriages. She added they had received six responses, one of which, Garnet Hill Lodge, offered a complete package entitled "Rainbow Weekend Wedding". She noted that the Garnet Hill Lodge package had been added to the New York State Tourism website; *a copy of the Garnet Hill Lodge Rainbow Weekend Wedding package details is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Johnson announced that "I ♥ NY" had initiated a new campaign entitled "More Smiles Per Gallon" to address the rising gasoline prices and the Adirondack Region had been selected as one of the regions to be promoted. She noted that the campaign promoted attractions in Lake Luzerne, Glens Falls, Queensbury, Lake George, Bolton Landing, Pottersville and North River.

Pertaining to the new video screens being installed at the Glens Falls Civic Center, Ms. Johnson stated that each Town had an opportunity to highlight three events which would be included in a banner that would run across the bottom of the video screen while the Tourism Department's 60-second video played. She noted she still needed three events to be designated from the Towns of Johnsbury, Lake Luzerne, Lake George, Chester and Bolton and the City of Glens Falls. She said the deadline for the three events was July 28, 2011 and requested that the Town Supervisors who were present submit their events before leaving the meeting.

Ms. Johnson reported that she had attended the maiden excursion of the new Saratoga & North Creek Railway (SNCRR) and opined that the scenery was captivating and the train cars were exquisite. She said she felt the Tourism Department would do well in promoting the SNCRR in conjunction with Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC. She noted that the SNCRR brochure was included in the agenda packet and contained information on the various excursions, times and fares. She commented that during the maiden excursion she had spoken with the publisher of *New York By Rail Magazine* and she noted that Warren County Tourism had been highlighted in the magazine in the past and she anticipated mention of the SNCRR in future editions.

Ms. Johnson commented that she and Tanya Brand, Group Tour Promoter, had attended a stakeholders meeting on July 11, 2011, pertaining to the Festival Space of the former Gaslight Village Property at which representatives from Elan Planning, Design & Landscape Architecture, PLLC had been present. She said they had discussed possible uses of the Festival Space and which attributes the location should have.

Mr. Goodspeed reported that official operations of the SNCRR began on Saturday, July 23, 2011 and an increase in pedestrian travel was noticed in the Town of Johnsbury. He said the advent of the train would readjust the tourism level in the Town of Johnsbury. He commented that there was a group of merchants who were operating shuttle golf carts between the train and Main Street. He opined that the Dome Cars operated by SNCRR were impressive and Ms. Johnson pointed out that there were only eight Dome Cars in existence and Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC owned seven of them. Mr. Goodspeed apprised that the contract with Iowa Pacific Holdings, LLC anticipated that the SNCRR would bring in over 900 skiers annually on the Gore Mountain Ski Train. He added there was an issue to be worked out with shuttle service from the Ski Train to the lodging properties. He said it had been noticed that several people were using the current shuttle system to travel to and from work. It had also been noticed, he continued, that local youths were utilizing the shuttle service to travel from the mountain to Main Street in order to eat lunch before returning to the mountain via the shuttle. Mr. Goodspeed noted that there had not been a Ski Train in the Town of North Creek since approximately World War II and Ms. Johnson added there had not been train service between North Creek and Saratoga since the 1950's.

Pertaining to the Group Tour Update, Ms. Brand reported that the deadline for the Group Tour Planner had been July 8, 2011. She said there were 42 advertisers, 8 of which were new this year. Mr. Girard displayed the Group Tour Planner for the Committee members and Ms. Brand noted that the Planner was four-color this year and had been re-designed.

Ms. Brand commented that Warren County Tourism was the co-sponsor of the American Bus Association (ABA) Tour Operator Binder Project. She explained that tour operators utilized the Binder as a resource and organizational tool. She added that Warren County Tourism would have an Adirondack Region Booth on the selling floor at the ABA Marketplace. Ms. Brand stated that Burt Goldstein, who was a group tour promoter who brought many ski groups to the area in the past, had introduced her to the new owner of a New York City based travel group called, Worldwide Discount Travel Club. Ms. Brand said she had invited the owner of the Club to a FAM (familiarization) Tour of the Capital and Adirondack Regions and the tour had included The Sagamore Resort and The Marcella Sembrich Opera Museum. She noted the owner would return in August to visit other area attractions and lodging properties.

Ms. Brand mentioned that some Warren County representatives had participated in the Centurion Cycling Preview Ride on June 26, 2011. She said she was working with VanGalder Bus on a 3-day tour itinerary for a group from Wisconsin to be held in October 2012. She noted the lead had been a direct result of her attendance at Heartland Travel Showcase. She stated the group was planning a Fall Foliage Tour and would stay at The Sagamore Resort. Ms. Brand reported that Sue Anderson, owner of Anderson Coach, had visited the area on June 19-21, 2011 to complete site inspections for the 3-day Anderson Coach Birthday Bash event planned for September 2011.

Ms. Brand said she had attended a New York City Sales Exchange on July 12, 2011 and Mr. Girard displayed photos from same to the Committee members. Ms. Brand noted she had conducted nineteen 10-minute appointments with International Inbound Tour Operators to highlight what Upstate New York had to offer and discuss what was new in the area.

Ms. Brand announced that Nicholas Caimano, former At-Large Supervisor for the Town of Queensbury, had given her a lead for the Naval Cryptologic Veterans Association who had scheduled their Fall Reunion for August 2011 to be held at the Queensbury Hotel for 50 members and their spouses. Ms. Brand said she had assisted an Orthodox Jewish 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Group with a May 2011 stay at the Wingate by Wyndham in the Town of Lake George. She noted the Wingate had met the groups needs by providing a great rate, private time at the pool, meeting space for prayers and a separate pantry for their kosher foods.

Mr. Girard pointed out that at a previous Committee meeting he had displayed photos pertaining to the segments of Lakes Region Fishing with Nate Laskiewicz which were filmed in Lake George. He added that Mr. Laskiewicz had offered him the opportunity to attend the video shoot so he could take still photos and shoot video footage. Mr. Girard displayed the images which had been captured during the video shoot for the Committee members and noted he had provided the images to Mr. Laskiewicz utilizing the Department's Flickr account.

Mr. Girard displayed the recent email blasts which were released by the Tourism Department to the Committee members. He said the Canada Day email blast had been sent on June 15, 2011 to over 5,000 email addresses and was opened by 1,500 people within the first three days. He commented that the 4<sup>th</sup> of July email blast was sent on June 29, 2011 to 139,000 email addresses and was opened by 13,000 people within the first three days. Mr. Girard displayed pages of the Warren County Tourism website and examples of the Fall advertisements to the Committee members.

Tom Connors, of Ad Workshop, said the Summer television campaign would continue to air through the second week of August. He added the television commercials aired in markets from Quebec, Canada to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and were viewed in over 7 million households. He noted that a banner campaign ran with the advertisements on various networks. He commented that the banner advertisements also ran on the login page of roadrunner.com and there had been a 40% increase in click-throughs since the onset of that initiative. Mr. Connors displayed Google Analytics results to the Committee members that showed the results of the banner advertisements. He reported that Mr. Laskiewicz would return in August to shoot two additional segments of Lakes Region Fishing pertaining to deep water large and small mouth bass.

Mike Consuelo, Special Events Coordinator for the Lake George Regional Convention & Visitors Bureau, distributed copies of his Monthly Activity Report to the Committee members and reviewed the report in detail; *a copy of same is on file with the minutes*. Mr. Consuelo thanked Ms. Johnson, Ms. Brand, Mr. McCoy and Mr. Merlino for participating in the Centurion Cycling Preview Ride. Mr. Consuelo said he had been in Lake Placid, New York during the Ironman Competition to promote the upcoming 2012 Centurion Cycling Event. He reported that the Adirondack Aerial Assault on the Beach event had taken place on Saturday, July 23, 2011 at Shepards Park in Lake George and he added an application had been submitted to hold next year's event at the same location. He said the athletes from the event had utilized 32 hotel rooms and he was still gathering information on the economic impact. He stated that a representative from the United Church of God would visit in September to determine if they would hold a September 2013 event in the area. He reported that he had participated in the taping of a segment of Schenectady Today to promote upcoming events throughout the County. Mr. Consuelo apprised he had attended several meetings pertaining to a possible Oktoberfest Event to be held in Lake George the first weekend in October 2011. He added the event would take place on Beach Road and would consist of a craft show, a German Automobile Show and a food, beverage and entertainment area. He noted the event would coincide with the World's Largest Garage Sale event in Warrensburg and the Warrensburg Chamber of Commerce had offered their full support in helping to promote the Oktoberfest Event. He apprised that the Group Motorcycle Sports Touring Association had called pertaining to a possible mid-week event in 2013 which would utilize 200 hotel rooms. He said he had also received a call from the Governor's Office, Film and Television Department, who were looking for a filming location for September and required a campsite with island access. Ms. Johnson interjected that the same lead had been forwarded to the Tourism Department via the Economic Development Corporation.

Pertaining to the Warren County Council of Chambers, Mr. Merlino reported there had been no Dinner Meeting scheduled this month; however, he added, there had been a Delegates Meeting which was attended by Ms. Brand. Ms. Brand said there had been a discussion pertaining to better communication and coordination with the Tourism Committee on an annual or bi-annual basis. She noted that she had been appointed as the liaison between the Tourism Committee and the Council of Chambers.

Mr. Merlino noted there were no pending items and reminded the Committee that the deadline for submitting three events from their Towns for the banner advertisement on the Civic Center video screens was tomorrow.

Pertaining to the report on local tourism mentioned by Ms. Johnson at the beginning of the meeting, Mr. Merlino reported that a Marine Corps Reunion had been booked in the Town of Lake Luzerne and the Town had assisted in negotiating a good hotel rate for them. He added there were 30 people anticipated to attend the Reunion and assistance had also been given with a location for a brunch and a dinner. He stated that Tour of the Adirondacks would hold a bicycle race in the Town of Lake

Luzerne on September 17, 2011. He said the race would cover 100 miles and would start and end in the Town of lake Luzerne. Mr. McCoy volunteered to give a report on local tourism in the Town of Lake George at the next Committee meeting. He noted that usually the two weeks following Independence Day were slow in Lake George; however, he continued, this year that time period was busy and he attributed the increase in business to Canadian tourists.

As there was no further business to come before the Tourism Committee, on motion made by Mr. McCoy and seconded by Mr. Kenny, Mr. Merlino adjourned the meeting at 10:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,  
Charlene DiResta, Sr. Legislative Office Specialist